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### Beethoven, Rossini, Verdi.

[From the Traveller, May 1.]

We have received the following lively pieces of musical criticism, from our Paris correspondent, SPIRIDION. They are compiled from a number of musical articles, translated from the Paris journals, for the *Traveller*.

Beethoven, says M. d'Ortigue, is the universal musician. He has excelled in every species of composition. Do not say that Beethoven was not endowed with dramatic genius, because he did not write *Don Juan*, nor *La Vestale*, nor the fourth act of *Les Huguenots*, nor *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. He wrote *Fidelio*, and the music of the *intermedes* of the *Comte d'Egmont*, of *Prometheus*, and the *Ruins of Athens*; and had he not composed all these works he would be none the less one of the first dramatic musicians, for he merged all the elements of the drama into instrumental music, in *sonatas* and *quatuors* even more than in symphonies. What is the importance of a frame if the picture exists? What imports the absence of *dramatis personæ* if passion rumbles and growls? Although it is true he wrote *Fidelio*, whose prison scene in the third act is one of the most moving scenes on the stage, Beethoven's genius was averse from these vulgar themes, these conventionalities which spring by the dozen from the prolific brains of our manufacturers of *libretti*, and which so many great composers have repented the evil hour in which they accepted them as themes. The originality and independence of his ideas could not suit themselves with the tricks of play-wrights. He had but to descend into his own heart, and there, at the source of those different passions which multiply man's life while they consume it, he loved to take no other confidant, no other interpreter than the ideal and vague language of music alone—language the more powerful and penetrating, as it is without auxiliary, without accessory, without foreign glitter. He did so, not with the wild hope of subjugating a numerous, elegant and frivolous audience, but to communicate to a few select hearers, assembled around a piano and four music stands, the various anguish,

the combats, the noble aspirations, the vehemence of a soul which moans its earthly captivity. Do not frame a miserable idea of this universality, and measure it by a "table of contents." It is a universality which includes all orders of ideas and sentiments, which supposes all gifts and every faculty, which assumes all tones and forms, which knows the secret of all the chords of the human heart, of all the voices of nature. Homer, though he wrote only the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; Dante, though he had written only the *Divine Comedy*, (I speak not of his *canzone*); Shakespeare, though he had written only his tragedies, are none the less universal geniuses, and there is something of Homer, Dante and Shakespeare in Beethoven.

See what takes place at the concerts of the Conservatory, and at the *sonata, trio, quatuor* and *quintette* concerts, which now begin to be so numerous, to the great honor of our musical education, and to the great satisfaction of those wisely exclusive amateurs who adore true art, classic art, pure art, with as much passion as they disdain false art, fashionable art, smirking and stiff art. After Beethoven, the others are listened to, but not with such ardent enthusiasm, such profound emotion. And yet these others are, no less than Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn and Weber, all of them, especially the two first, imitable models of that style where all the delicacy and the elegance of art are mingled with the most scientific combinations, where secret reverie, light coquetry, dispute the victory with subdued energy, and where (especially with the last) passion overflows in profound accents, in vibrating melodies, in abrupt and bold harmony. But it is Beethoven who takes supreme possession of us. He transports us into ideal spheres, and above the terrestrial and tumultuous region where the human passions toss, he exhibits to us the pure light of intellect.

Haydn and Mozart! Let no critic's breath cloud that halo of purity that glitters around their glorious brows! Let no word ever escape my lips which may in any wise diminish the admiration due to those immortal creators of exquisite forms who have thrown over their works all the splendor of unity, all the beauty of proportion, all the connection of drawing, all the grace of outline and detail, all the affluence and freshness of imagination, which form finished, complete works! Let this justice, this gratitude, these homages be rendered to them by those who, with us, hold that the sphere of Art is not confined to the mere exhibition of that which these masters have expressed with such disheartening perfection. It is perfection, but relative perfection, which, as we think, does not exclude a grander, higher, more complete order of beauty, in a vaster frame. Let us confess it—Beethoven is, perhaps, less perfect as an artist than they, but he is greater than they. He opened immeasurable horizons in Art; he introduced into Art orders of ideas and sentiments which the limits of Art seemed incapable of containing. Others depicted man, nature, and sometimes the marvellous, which is only the personification of the hidden forces of nature. Mozart found the supernatural in *Don Juan*. Weber found the terribly fantastic in *Der Freyschütz*, and the sportively fantastic in *Oberon*, whose sudden appearance at the Theatre Lyrique

has been a revelation, some say a revolution. Beethoven opened heaven and revealed infinity to mortal sight. He has not done *differently* from Haydn and Mozart. He has done *more*. He contains in himself all of Haydn and all of Mozart. He has, as it were, absorbed them. We see them float and dilate in the transparency of his harmonious substance. He has made them his, and he is greater than they, because he contains them.

When one of Beethoven's last *quatuors*, interpreted by cunning hands, vibrates in your ear, if you find at first your sense of hearing embarrassed, if you feel as if enveloped by sonorous clouds, and find difficulty in catching the clue of the mysterious labyrinth, beware of exclaiming too soon: "Tis unintelligible, 'tis obscure." Obscurity really exists; but be patient; wait for the coming light, which will throw a retrospective effulgence over the dark shades through which you have passed. Suspend your judgment and take good heed that you do not repeat the absurdities which were current some years ago: that Beethoven in his last works merely doated, that his thoughts were hid in clouds, that his deafness had blunted the internal perception of sounds. Avoid, too, applying to that music the common laws of proportion, plot, construction and development, by which you appreciate the works of other composers, and of another epoch; or rather apply these laws, but in vaster dimensions than you apply them to other works. It is evident that ordinary limits are too narrow to contain this, his torrent of thought, sentiments, expressions, forms, coördinated into a conception whose entirety and details belong to the highest aesthetics. Wait, then, until light appears, until Beethoven has pronounced his "*fiat lux*." Do not be obstinate; do not resist with all your judgment and all your will the *maestro's* idea, for then you will see nothing, you will distinguish nothing—and all by your own fault, by your own obstinacy. Light? Behold it! It bursts forth suddenly, in full effulgence, and dissipates all clouds. Hereafter, all is visible, everything assumes its proper form and possesses its proper relief. Intermittent light and shade are necessary, that the sight (for, as M. Victor Hugo says, the ear as well as the mind hath its eye), may sustain unblinded this dazzling effulgence. Besides, even the shades now are penetrated by light. If we find ourselves surrounded by twilight, certain it is we are never enveloped by night. We feel as if some superhuman being were leading us from world to world—some worlds being effulgent as of themselves, and others shining with a borrowed light. How pure is the atmosphere into which we are transported! How easy is respiration! How keen and subtle the air is at these heights! What delicate, eloquent, sublime, ingenious and serene whisperings doth genius pour into our ravished ear! This is not my personal impression. The miracle of this music, only yesterday hooted as incomprehensible, is that all who hear it, whether they be musicians or not, feel the same impression. It speaks the same language to all, great and little, whether it depicts the human passions with its supremest energy, or whether it lifts the soul to contemplation and to ecstasy. The ear of the musician, the ear of him for whom Art has no secret unrevealed, is perhaps even

oftener puzzled than the ear of the amateur. Do not think in this entirety there is no place for grace, airy grace, for playfulness, for genial and capricious gaiety. One of the most singular traits of Beethoven's genius, is that he is never more sublime than when he seems determined upon airy grace. What wonders does he not produce, with the most insignificant fragment detached from a leading theme?

Such are the last *quatuors* and the last *sonatas* of Beethoven. We may, it is true, prefer the works which by a common consent are classed as being of the "second manner" of the composer. We may examine them through the microscope and discover strange associations of accords, hard expressions proceeding from "prolongations," though more commonly from "anticipations." I admit all these criticisms, which in no wise diminish my praises.

#### ROSSINI.

It is all-important that these works be executed in certain conditions, not only of rigorous exactness and fidelity, but also of room and resonance. To have them executed, for instance, by all the violins, all the altos, all the bass viols of an orchestra, would be to disfigure them, to efface their peculiar mark—I had almost said, to bereave them of their chastity and virginal character. These last *quatuors* must be heard at the concerts of MM. Maurin, Chevillard, Mas, and Sabatier. It was indeed a red-letter day for these young men, the day when the author of *Guillaume Tell* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (it was three weeks ago) walked alone to the room where they rehearse, and asked them to be good enough to play him one of their favorite *quatuors*.

The surprise, delight, pride, and gratitude of these young men at this unexpected visit may be conceived. The famous *quatuor* in *ut* *dies minor* was executed; this single listener was no other than Rossini. He suggested this *quatuor*, not because he had heard it before, but because he had heard it spoken of as one of those which best condensed and exhibited that period of independence, poetry, and unrestrained genius by which Beethoven terminated his glorious career. Never did the four instruments resound with more vibratory and pathetic accents; never did bows move with more enthusiasm and fire; never did soldiers, animated by the presence of a general-in-chief, march with more order and promptness. When the piece was ended, rest assured that the great *maestro* was in no wise embarrassed to express in simple and charming language, how highly he appreciated this admirable execution and the traits of genius so numerous in the work; and when he told them of the visit he, Rossini, paid Beethoven at Vienna in 1822, he spoke in the most feeling manner of the poverty, the want, the wretchedness in which he saw the great man, and the painful impression he retained of the visit.

Since I am speaking of Rossini, let me say that those are greatly mistaken who imagine that Rossini, after having voluntarily abandoned his career at the age of thirty-nine, closing it with no less a production than *Guillaume Tell*, remains indifferent to musical art and its progress in Italy, France, and Germany. No one, on the contrary, observes with livelier solicitude the march of institutions and men likely to be of service to the art. Rossini is the Classic. He daily meditates upon the works of Jean Sebastian Bach. Haydn, and especially Mozart, are in his eyes the eternal models. He admires too the works of Weber, Schubert, and Mendelssohn. His judgments are equitable, full of good feeling, and altogether without personal vanity. I have just said that Rossini is the Classic. I add that he has always been so.

When he was eleven years old he led at Bologna the oratorio of "The Seasons." His fellow pupils observed his predilection for Haydn and Mozart, and he is fond of telling how his master, Mattei, never called him by any other name than *il piccolo Tedesco*. As for Beethoven, he holds him in almost religious veneration: "Beethoven is complete (*tout entier*) in his *sonatas*," he frequently says. By which I understand him to mean that those who know Beethoven only in one of his symphonies do not know him

completely. In the symphony Beethoven addresses himself to a large audience, such an audience as an orchestra would assemble. In the *sonata*, in the *quatuor*, he is more familiar; he comes near us, although his idea always appears in a grand form. Melodies are also in it, and if they are not more abundant, at least they are more apparent, and more free from the attendance of instrumental resonance and combinations.

#### VERDI.

I hope you are not fatigued, and that I still command your attention sufficiently to read with interest M. Fiorentini's criticism on Verdi, which I have long kept by me, waiting the propitious moment which would allow me to send it you.

*Rigoletto*, antecedent in date to the *Trociatore* and *La Traviata*, marks, together with these two last works, a new phase in M. Verdi's talents, which may be called his "second manner." The first compositions of the young *maestro* breathed something *grandiose*, heroic, and virile, which made an impression on Italian imaginations, enervated and blunted to disgust by the old formulas of melody, which had been incredibly abused. The new comer aimed at higher destinies, and was animated by a noble ambition, to found in his turn a new school. No subject seemed vast or lofty enough for him; the Crusades, Palestine and Egypt, Italy and Spain in the Middle Ages, the intoxicated pride of Nebuchadnezzar, and the punishment which fell upon him at the foot of his broken idol, the sand of the desert watered with Lombard blood, the implacable vengeance of old Sylva, and the soliloquy of Charles V.: *O sommo Carlo*,—all these but half satisfied him. He would have called to his aid Homer and Dante, David and his Psalms, Solomon and his Canticles, Sophocles, Corneille, and Shakspeare, that he might make "books" out of their dramas and immortal poems. But if the idea was great, and the inspiration generous, the *afflatus* often failed the young composer, and his powers betrayed him when he deemed himself nearest the goal he would reach. His hand was not yet sure enough to fill out the lines it had traced without deviation. In a word, the execution did not always correspond with the design. His phrases were short and abrupt; his musical period was neither large enough nor clear enough for the development of his ideas; his noisy and hard instrumentation went by hops and jumps, and seemed to drive melody away before it, *à grands coups de pied dans les reins*. He was reproached with abusing the *crescendo* and with employing the *unison*, not only several times in the same work, but in the same act, and in the same scene. He had, too, the reputation of being without pity for voices. They said nobody would use altos and trombones as he used singers. These accusations, whether just or unjust, certainly were made from every quarter.

Two or three works which followed *I Lombardi*, *Nabucco*, and *Ernani*, had not the success of the first compositions. A profounder and calmer study of the resources of art and of the taste of the public then inspired M. Verdi with serious reflections. He varied his style, and moderated, while at the same time he studied more attentively, his harmony. He voluntarily descended from the flight on which he had soared with a fortunate, but sometimes unequal and dangerous wing, to walk with a firm and confident step upon a verdant lawn. He abandoned his pretension of being always sublime, to express more true, more human sentiments, to speak a simple, a more touching language, which every body could comprehend. He quitted the epic and the historical painting, for familiar and domestic drama, for cabinet pictures of smaller dimensions but of a more delicate, correct, and finished touch.

We need only glance at the last scores written by M. Verdi to see how much he has modified his manner, and put, so to speak, the "soft pedal" to his orchestra. He has now melodies of exquisite grace and freshness, which once he would have rejected as being too ingenuous or too popular. He has delightful details of accompaniment, flowers of harmony so delicate and so pure that,

*certainly*, he would not crush them then with his own hand beneath the brutal pressure of brass instruments and gongs. I know that I may be reminded of the anvils of *Il Trociatore*; but that is only an exception. This cadenced sound of the forge, which has found admirers among us, only accompanies two couplets sung by gipsies, the words of which are not very important. M. Verdi has always been master of the science of contrasts and stage effects, the secret of grouping voices on the front or at the back of the stage, of relieving a melody without novelty or any salient point by a syllabic chorus, a slower or more rapid measure, a sound which is broken off or prolonged, which increases or is extinguished.

Nobody better than he can make the most of a dramatic situation; but then it must appeal to the eyes as well as to the soul; all the accessories, all the illusions of theatrical optics must aid the effect; the day must fade away and the moon rise; the bell must chime, the organ wail, the storm burst in all its strength, and the thunder roll, peal after peal. See how he carries away the public! A woman weeps, a prisoner sobs, invisible voices sing the passing prayer;—and you have the finest piece of the *Trociatore*! Conspirators menace in the shade and murmur threats of vengeance and death, while a brilliant barque filled with handsome women and noble young lords, floats over the dark blue sea, basking in sunlight, and sing to the breeze the gay burden of a ballad;—and you have the best scene of the *Vepres Siciliennes*!

Two voices laugh on one side, two voices weep on the other, and in the background of this sinister scene a knife is uplifted to spare the guilty and immolate the innocent—and you have the most admirable page of *Rigoletto*! Doubtless this is not everything; when the situation has once been found, the talent of the composer consists in choosing the melody and rhythm well, in disposing and combining the voices, and placing them together and in relief by the skilful opposition of a counter-point. I am far from wishing to disparage, in any respect, the talents and merits of the illustrious *maestro*; I explain the method he most commonly employs, and which he would do wrong to change, for he has invariably been successful with it.

*Louisa Miller* was a great progress. It exhibited the new path the composer was endeavoring to find. It is written with infinitely more care than his preceding scores. It contains general pieces in perfect harmony, and which do not owe all their effect to unison, that method which tells on the crowd, but which masters of the art disdain as being too vulgar and too monotonous. Nevertheless *Louisa Miller*, despite its numerous beauties, had only a passable success at the Italian Opera in Paris. It failed completely at the Grand Opera, although an excellent artist, Mme. Bosio, filled the chief rôle. Because as yet fashion had taken under its protection neither the composer nor the lyric actress, the tide did not serve them. Mark this well, and never regret too much the lukewarmness and the repugnance of the public; never reckon too confidently on its caprices and its favor.

Of the three works instanced at the beginning of this article, *La Traviata* is certainly the feeblest. *Il Trociatore* has more character, more unity, more elevation: *Rigoletto* has more charm, more tenderness, a nobler and purer sentiment, and (what the other operas have not) a well drawn, distinct character, master of the plot, almost always on the stage, and filling the four acts of the drama with his grief, his irony, his anger, his vengeance and his despair. The instrumentation of *Rigoletto* seems to me the best M. Verdi has yet dictated. It contains the greatest beauties. Many musicians prefer the *quatuor* of the last act to the famous *Miserere*. Perhaps they are right. Let that be as it may, the three last scenes of M. Verdi have a family likeness which cannot be mistaken; which is proper enough in sisters, children of the same father:

"Facies non omnibus una,  
Nec diversa tamen," etc.



**VERDI IN EXETER HALL.**—The London *Times* of April 14th, has the following:

A musical entertainment of a novel and varied character took place last night, under the title of the "Grand Verdi Festival," which attracted an immense concourse of people to Exeter Hall. For the admirers of Verdi, the popular representative of Young Italy, the concert provided was a real treat, since it comprised a selection of favorite *morceaux* from his three more successful operas—*Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto*. The means of execution, vocal and instrumental, moreover, were on a scale of the highest efficiency. The band was chosen from among the members of the Orchestral Union, and directed by Mr. Alfred Mellon. The solo singers were Madame Clara Novello, Miss Louisa Vinning, Miss Dolby, Messrs. Weiss, Millardi and Sims Reeves. The chorus was from the Royal Italian-Opera. Thus everything had been done to give the utmost effect to the music, and the result was in all respects satisfactory.

Some curiosity was excited about the programmes, which on such occasions generally contain the words of all the vocal pieces; and it was very naturally apprehended that the Exeter Hall committee, who were so straight-laced about the *Shabab Mater* and the *Requiem*, would entertain strong objections to the text of the notorious *Traviata*. The committee, however, had, in vulgar parlance, taken the bull by the horns; and instead of authorizing the distribution of such a carefully edited bill as might have been appropriately styled "Beauties of *Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto*," condemned all three, by insinuation, as unfit for the sanctified precincts of that edifice which has been pleasantly denominated "the architectural glory of the Strand." To quote the paragraph conveying the intimation, they "interdicted the publication of an English translation of the programme in the form of a book of words." The naughty sentences were allowed to be breathed and uttered by the "singing men and women," but forbidden to be printed; they may be heard, but not seen. *N'importe*; the whole was delivered in the Italian tongue, which "soft bastard Latin" is probably regarded by the Exeter Hall authorities as something akin to hieroglyph.

With regard to the enormous audience that assembled last night at the call of Verdi, it was surmised that three-fourths consisted of persons who would on no account have been tempted to visit a theatre, and yet thought it quite legitimate to listen to the words and music of *La Traviata* in Exeter Hall. Whether this was or was not the case, some poetical wag must have considered the theme a good one, since a lyrical squib was circulated in the hall through some mysterious agency, which caused no little speculation and merriment.

The performances gave great satisfaction, and there would have been no end of encores had Mr. Sims Reeves and Madame Novello, who were first honored by a redemand—in the scene of the "Miserere" from the *Trovatore*—displayed the courage and good taste to resist it, satisfied to acknowledge the compliment by returning to the platform and bowing to the audience. The malcontents continued obstreperous for a long time, however; and when at last Mr. Weiss came on to sing "Il balen," he was saluted, amid considerable applause, with a tolerable amount of sibilation. The good feeling of the majority, nevertheless, soon stifled these uncourteous sounds, and Mr. Weiss was allowed to wade through that somniferous air in peace. Another boisterous call for repetition followed Miss Louisa Vinning's execution of the cavatina, *Tacea la Notte*; but she, with commendable spirit, imitated the example so wisely set by Madame Novello and Mr. Sims Reeves. The storm raised by this second disappointment, and kept up with great obstinacy, wore itself gradually out till it was lost in the still more potent clamor of Mr. Alfred Mellon's orchestra, which brought the first part to an end with some of the most vociferous of the Verdian harmonies and unisons, gathered from the "Selection" so well known to the patrons of the

Surrey Gardens. With a portion of the same *olla podrida* the concert had been imposingly inaugurated. The other pieces from the *Trovatore* were the duet between Leonora and Count de Luna and the *canzone* of Azucena, the gipsy—*Stride la campe*—the first of which was intrusted to Miss Vinning and Mr. Weiss, the last to Miss Dolby.

Strange to say, the *morcenux* from *La Traviata* produced scarcely any effect, although the grand aria of the heroine: "Ah forse lui," was admirably sung by Madame Novello, and the *brindisi*, "Libiamo, libiamo," (which almost "fell dead"), enjoyed every chance of success in the hands of Miss Vinning and Mr. Sims Reeves. The lengthy mock-sentimental duo between the lovers, in the final and most physical scene of the opera, ("Parigi o cara"), essayed by Miss Vinning and Mr. Millardi, went for nothing, nor did the lachrymose apostrophe of Alfredo's easily affected parent—"Di Provenza"—with all the good will that Mr. Weiss exhibited in its performance, appear to strike the audience with any greater degree of amazement. Probably Handel, Mozart and Mendelssohn may have wrapped the interior of Exeter Hall in an atmosphere unfavorable to Verdi. At any rate the only piece in the *Traviata* which afforded the least gratification was the aria of Madame Novello, above mentioned; and that, we make bold to say, was caused rather by the singing than the music.

The *Rigoletto* selection began with the introduction and ball scene, and terminated with the *polonaise*, (for orchestra), the interval between the two being filled up by five of the most admired vocal pieces, allotted to the singers we have named. After all, notwithstanding its diffuseness and the trivialities in which it abounds, *Rigoletto* is the best of Verdi's operas, and the quartet, "Bella Figlia," the best of Verdi's compositions. If only he could always write in this manner, or in the manner of some parts of the *Trovatore*, he would perhaps neither be so rich, so prosperous, nor so eagerly idolized by the untutored and listless crowd, but he would stand a better chance of outliving himself in his music.

To the Editor of Dwight's Journal of Music.

#### The Festival—Arrangement of the Stage.

The rehearsals for the Festival are going on very successfully indeed. On Tuesday evening about four hundred persons took part in the "Creation," which after the very difficult music of "Elijah," was taken up with great energy and success.

It is evident now that some important changes must be made in the arrangement of the stage, as its present capacity will not be sufficient to receive the great number of performers who are to take part. What shall the change be?

Some propose extending the stage forward into the hall. By this of course many seats upon the lower floor would be lost to the audience. Can this loss not be avoided? If seats are to be sacrificed—and they clearly must be—why not sacrifice those which are in the stage ends of the lower gallery? For my part, as a member of the choir, it would be a great gratification to me if the public was excluded from those seats at all choral performances. We want the audience before us, and it is no very pleasant thing to have fifty or a hundred strangers just at your elbows, who, being so placed that they can only hear one or two parts in a chorus with distinctness, have nothing to do but talk and laugh, and criticize the imperfections of the unlucky individuals, shouting for dear life, who happen to stand hard by the gallery. But how will the sacrifice of the seats in the ends of the lower gallery help the matter?

Simply, Sir, by allowing the removal of the railing in front, and building a temporary structure of seats, rising amphitheatrically, from near the conductor's stand to the gallery. What is there to hinder turning the end of the music hall into nearly the form of the lecture room below? If this should be done, every person who has ever had experience in chorus singing, will see how much easier it will be for the singers to perform their parts, than if, after having learned them below, when they come to sing in public the

whole effect of the music to their—the singers'—ears, is changed, by a quite different arrangement of the choral pieces. The best singers in the world must rehearse together if they will sing well in concert. They must moreover rehearse where the influences acting upon them shall be about the same as in the public performance. Let me illustrate. In opera, a concerted piece is studied, with the singers in the same relative position to each other that they are to hold when they sing in public. Certain tones come to their ears and guide them in coming in, in proper time, tune and rhythm. If this be an important matter in such a case, how much more important in the case of a huge chorus of five or six hundred voices, most of whom never sang in concert before, and many of whom, however good singers they may be in other music, cannot in so short a time as three or four weeks learn to feel at home in the music of "Elijah," the "Messiah" and "Creation?"

If the only change made be to extend the present stage, how, under heaven, is it going to be possible for all to stand in such a position as to read their music and watch the conductor's baton at the same time? I do not know in whose hands this matter rests, but in the name of all of us, who are not great singers and capable of going along blindfolded, I pray that the wishes of Mr. Zerrahn as leader, and of us his subjects, be consulted. Let us sit at the performance as we do at the rehearsals, and then if we break down, we will bear the blame cheerfully. At the rehearsals, the semicircular position of our seats enables us to hear the other parts, and we can always tell where we are. At the performances in the music hall this past winter, this was not possible in the case of many who occupied the rear rows of seats.

Then as to the improved effect which the choirs thus arranged will produce, that has been previously discussed in your Journal, and I will only add, that I heard men express their utter astonishment at the volume and fullness of Mr. Werner's chorus last Sunday evening, which, as you know, numbered in all not more than the tenors or the basses of the Handel and Haydn Society, but which by means of a temporary platform, was brought into a compact body in the centre of the stage, with all the orchestra behind.

If our arrangement at the rehearsals be broken up at the performance, a single rehearsal in a new position will hardly be sufficient to do away with the ill effects of such a measure; and I for one should desire to be excused from attempting those enormously difficult choruses in "Elijah."

A MEMBER OF THE CHORUS.

#### Diary.

APRIL 15th.—Looking into the "American Notes and Queries" for this month. I suppose such periodicals are to be considered as authorities. If so, I am greatly indebted to the first article in this number for the following pieces of information:

1. That J. J. Heidegger's name should be Heidegger, and that Hawkins, Burney, Hogarth, the Encyclopedias, &c., are wrong in their spelling.
2. That Handel's name is George William.
3. That "Heidegger did not relish the opposition which Handel caused, and resorted to many things to injure the character of Handel."

Queer, is it not, that so independent a fellow as was Handel, should have entered into an engagement with this Heidegger in 1729, to carry on the musical Drama at their own risk! In order to save time, Handel, in the autumn of 1728, set off for Italy, where he engaged a new band of singers. July 2d, 1729, the following announcement appeared in the London *Daily Courant*:

"Mr. Handel, who is just returned from Italy, has contracted with the following persons to perform in the Italian Operas: Signor Bernacchi, who is esteemed the best singer in Italy; Signora Merighi, a woman of a very fine presence, an excellent actress and a very good singer with a counter-tenor voice; Signora Strada, who hath a very fine treble voice, a person of singular merit; Signor Annibale Pio

Fabri, a most excellent tenor and a fine voice; his wife, who performs a man's part exceedingly well; Signora Bertoldi, who has a very fine treble voice; she is also a very genteel actress both in men and women's parts; a base voice from Hamburg, there being none worth engaging in Italy."

This base voice was John Gottfried Reimschneider. May 18th, 1734, Handel's *Pastor Fido* was revived, ran thirteen nights, "and terminated the season July 6th, and Handel's contract with Heidegger."

APRIL 29.—How easy it is to get a glimpse of real musical enjoyment! Last evening our little Society at Cambridge gave a concert, under the direction of Mr. L. H. SOUTHARD, of which the "roast beef" of the bill of fare was the 16th Mass by Haydn, followed by a selection of lighter music.

The affair was quite successful. Now why is it that in our smaller cities, we can so seldom hear anything of this kind, and that about all the staple concert music (!) is made up of Negro melodies and "old folks' " psalmody?

Two things only are necessary, namely: patience and perseverance on the part of the members of the musical society, and a conductor who knows what he is about. So far as my observation extends, in our country towns, there is not one of four or five thousand inhabitants, where there is not musical talent sufficient for just such a concert as this of last evening. With a few choruses, a few songs, part of a mass, and a piece or two of organ or piano-forte music, I can enjoy an evening in Yankee land, though not in the same manner, as well as in the grand opera houses and music halls of Europe. Try it, good people of the country!

MAY 2.—A writer in the *Independent*, speaking of Beethoven's Heroic Symphony, says:

"It will not detract from our love of Beethoven to know that when Napoleon was made emperor, the Symphony was not finished; and he was so much disappointed at the supposed change in the great man whom he had honored, that he threw it aside in disgust, and did not finish it for years afterwards."

Very pretty—but unluckily the symphony was finished.

MAY 4.—A typographical error in the remarks of Mr. Thayer, in *Dwight's Journal* last week, makes Handel come to London in 1702. His first visit thither was 1710. He settled there in 1712.

MAY 6.—Looking through a pamphlet printed at Wittemberg in 1528, containing Luther's instructions to the parish clergy of Saxony, my eye fell upon a passage, which strikes me as not inapplicable at the present day, changing the word *German* to *English*. He says, being translated: "On high festivals, as Christ day, Easter, Ascension day, Pentacost, and the like, it may be well that some pieces of music in Latin be sung during the mass, using such as are biblical. For it is folly always to sing the same music. And although some will make German music, not every one has the talent and grace thereto."

Here is a passage from another pamphlet of Luther. It is an address upon the subject of schools, to the various city governments of Germany. The copy from which I translate was printed at Wittemberg in 1524, while the author was still a monk:

"People take so much time and pains to teach their children to play cards, to sing and dance, why do they not take as much time to teach them reading and other arts, while they are young and have nothing else to do, and can learn easily and with pleasure? For my part, had I children or could I have them, they should not only study languages and history, but singing also, and music and mathematics. For what is all this, (for them), but mere child's play?"

## Musical Correspondence.

CINCINNATI, O., APRIL 22. During the past four weeks we have had quite a number of concerts, and some pretty fair performances of most excellent music. The St. Cecilia Choral Society gave us

Schiller's "Lay of the Bell," by Romberg, and Mendelssohn's beautiful 42d Psalm. What glorious music in the latter composition! We wonder that Eastern societies do not perform it more frequently than according to public accounts they seem to do. The opening chorus to those inspiring words: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God!" is as fine, we think, as anything Mendelssohn has written in that style.

The Philharmonic Society, for their last concert, had the following programme:

PART I.  
Symphony, No. 2, in D. . . . . Beethoven  
Aria from the Opera, "Charles VI." . . . . Halévy  
Miss Fanny Raymond  
"Concert Militaire," for the Violin. . . . . Lipinsky  
Mr. H. De Clercq.

PART II.  
Overture—"Echoes of Ossian." . . . . Gade  
Cavatina, from the Opera "Betty." . . . . Donizetti  
Miss Raymond  
Overture—"The Marriage of Figaro." . . . . Mozart

We need not hide a little pride in giving our programmes repeatedly to publicity; it is truly refreshing for us musical people, after years of panting for some good orchestral performances in this thus far musically benighted city, to have heard this winter three Symphonies of Beethoven and one of Haydn, besides many fine overtures. We certainly have accomplished a great deal for only one season, and yet we look upon this as merely a beginning, and have strong hopes of much better performances and of more good music during the next winter. The Philharmonic Society are already seeking to obtain subscriptions for six concerts, to be given next winter; they are for striking the iron whilst it is hot, and their many generous friends give them a liberal assistance. We want for our orchestra some good performers on the horn, violoncello, oboe and trumpet, and well educated musicians, who play on these instruments, would be gladly welcomed and could probably make a tolerably good living here next winter. Many very able German musicians, when emigrating to this country, seem to remain in New York, and there to be lost in the crowd and among the many temptations of a great metropolis; whereas, should they come to the Western cities, we doubt not they would in a short time secure a much better position and find more solid friends than in the Broadway beer saloons.

Our Quartet Club continues to give soirées in private parlors, and to perform Quartets by Haydn, Beethoven, Kreutzer, etc. To-morrow the Cecilia and Philharmonic Societies give jointly a grand Benefit Concert for their excellent friend and leader, Mr. RITTER. In a week or two we shall have the opportunity of hearing the lion, Thalberg and his antiquated Fantasias; we see his prosaic face now in nearly every shop-window. X.

BERLIN, APRIL 1.—The Royal Opera opened the new year with Weber's genial creation, *Euryanthe*. The representation was in part very successful, made so chiefly by JOHANNA WAGNER as Eglantine, and FRAN KOESTER as Euryanthe. Both are among the best and finest rôles of these two singers, and the public, warmly alive to the high artistic enjoyment, could not applaud enough to express its enthusiasm after the great aria of Eglantine and the following pieces.

The management saw fit to celebrate the birth-day of Mozart, (Jan. 27), by Donizetti's *Liebestrank*, (Elixir of Love)! Not till two days afterwards was Mozart's "Titus" produced, and that too as—the first carnival opera! Although this opera, (composed by Mozart for the coronation of Leopold I., in 1791, immediately after the *Zauberflöte* and before the *Requiem*), is over-rich in musical beauties, yet it cannot be denied that, with the exception of the grand and powerful Finale in E flat, the music does not rise to that dramatic life, that inspiration, which we admire in other operas of the immortal master.

In the concert room one would find incomparably more pleasure in the wealth of splendid arias and duets with which Mozart lets his *four* (!) female singers alternate. Köster and Johanna Wagner distinguished themselves. The former caused rapturous delight by her classical rendering of the airs in G F, in which we disliked only the often too protracted *ritardando*, by which she more than once in the great duet placed Wagner in the most painful predicament, weakening still more the already lifeless action. Fräulein Wagner excelled particularly in her recitatives and in the Rondo in A, whereas her execution of the passages in triplets in the Aria in B flat, left much to be desired.

Goethe's "Egmont," with Beethoven's music, was revived at the court theatre; but it suffered greatly in the orchestra through lack of energy in the conductor, the concert-master, RIES, who never will be competent to seize the intentions of Beethoven and infuse them into the performers.

Cherubini's *Wasserträger*, (*Deux Journées*), worthily takes rank with the best operas of our German masters. We find the grace and sincerity of Haydn in the melodies, the strength and significance of Mozart in the harmonies and the ingenious treatment of the orchestra by this Florentine. With his eminent talent, and his fresh and glowing power of invention, he has striven to equal these German models. In all his creations he shows originality, depth and nobleness of thought, and shines as a worthy scholar of Sarti not less by his dexterous treatment of the voice-parts, than by the fine painting in his instrumentation, which lends quite a peculiar charm to his works. As in the music of the church he has won an immortal name by his *Missa solennis* and his *Requiem*, so do his *Medea*, his *Lodoiska*, and especially his "Water-Carriers" secure for him a place of honor among the classical opera composers. The overture, as well as the two finales in E flat and in E, are rich in the most beautiful effects, and full sounded right well; which cannot be said of the of character and life. The air of the Savoyard, which was satisfactorily rendered by Herr KRAUSE, denotes the character admirably. The introductory motive appears again very expressively in the melodrama of the second act. We see that the art of musical *signalization*, which our modern opera reformers claim, as they do much else, as their own invention, was used already then; and I recall a happy example in Gluck, who repeats the sweet sounds which greet Iphigenia at her reception in Aulis, again on the occasion of her banishment in Tauris, as a painful reminiscence of long-fled, rosy youth. The performance of the *Wasserträger* suffered on the part of the singers in the first act from a certain lifeless monotony of manner, only relieved by occasional flashes from Mme. Köster and Herr Krause. The choruses of soldiers in the second act female voices which introduced the wedding congratulations in the last act; these made an unpleasant impression by the sharp and cutting distinctness of their tones. The voice of Fräulein GEY sounded very prettily, while that of Fräulein SIEBER was almost inaudible.

The Kapelle, under the direction of Kapellmeister DORN, has done excellent things. Dorn has produced a new comic opera: "A Day in Russia." The first act alone is interesting; hence it was well for the total impression, that the composer shortened it after the first representations. The greatest applause followed the extremely lovely representation of Johanna Wagner, who in this opera showed not only that she is remarkable in the tragic and heroic sphere, but that she also possesses a rich vein of the most surprising and delightful humor. The part of Kalikoff needed, so long as it fell into no finer hands than those of Herr BOST, still further shortening.

*Iphigenia in Aulis*, and *Orpheus*, those two master-



works of Gluck, have by their last performance, in spite of many faults, especially on the part of the director, rekindled in thousands of hearts that enthusiasm with which the operas of Gluck's last period must always fill the soul that is at all susceptible to the true and the beautiful. It is well known that Gluck, after he had already written more than forty operas in the conventional style of the day, first made in his *Orpheus* the beginning of that radical reform which laid the foundation of a new era of operatic style. That opera was first brought out in 1764, in Vienna, and had even then a decided success, without being comprehended in all its majesty and grandeur by a public completely prepossessed by the petrified manner of the then prevailing bravura opera. Gluck then turned to Paris, where he found an altogether greater field for his efforts. At length the *Iphigenia in Aulis* was performed on the 19th of April, 1774, at the express command of Queen Maria Antoinette, and in spite of all sorts of chicanery, with a success scarcely equalled in the history of opera. In two years it was performed two hundred times. Gluck, not without justice, has been called the Aeschylus among dramatic composers. No one understood, better than he did, how to portray great passion, antique heroic shapes, in music. The sharpness of his characterization, the intelligent reproduction of all the details of the poem, the wonderful truth displayed in his use of the then existing orchestral forces, the sublimity of his choruses; to which add the highest and noblest simplicity, which so often leads him to the song form, weaving the sweetest spell around us—these are a small part of the excellencies of this great master, by which he completely overcame the immense favorite, Piccini, and laid the foundation of an entirely new operatic style, in which Mozart and others recognized a glorious model.

Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro" did not draw a very numerous audience, and the performance lacked the usual dignity and unction. The part of the Countess was taken by Fräulein STORK, from Brunswick, who, beyond the purity and correctness of her vocal method and the distinctness of her utterance, lacks the qualities for appearing on the first operatic stage of Germany in this part after Mme. Köster. Her voice is full and round, not without compass, but the registers are not well connected. There was no trace of the fine graces which Mme. Köster wins from the principal arias; only in the last aria did she find applause, and that not without opposition. Frau TRIETSON was well disposed and gave the Page skilfully and aptly. Herr KRAUSE counts the Figaro among his best parts, and gave satisfaction, if he did not come up to his previous achievements. Herr SALOMON sang the "Count" with a chivalric ease and certainty, but frequently fell short of the requisite strength to maintain herself above the orchestra. The pearl of the evening was Mme. HERNBURG-TUCZEK, who in voice and action is so much at home in the part of Susanna, that to her belongs the prize among our German singers in this opera. Especially, she sang Susanna's aria, which is so full of longing, with so much soul, so much devotion, in such mystically sweet *piano*, that she was most deservedly called out. In our Kapelle almost every player is not only a virtuoso on his instrument, but a *knower* of the Mozart music. From the instrumental ensemble the solo oboist stood out in a masterly light in his frequently interspersed little solos. The conclusion of the opera would certainly have gained by more repose in tempo. The director seemed to have forgotten that rapid tempi, even in Presto, were formerly reckoned a monstrosity. In many of Mozart's pieces we have proof that the Presto of that time was scarcely faster than our ordinary *Allegro*.

On the 20th Fräulein STORK sang in *Tannhäuser* before only a moderately full house. . . . In the latter

part of March, Verdi's *Trovatore* was got up with great expenditure of forces. Verdi, in a little more than fifteen years, has produced upwards of thirty operas, nearly all of which have excited a real fanaticism in Italy, but only a few of which, and those with small success, except *Ernani*, have found their way into Germany. The success of the *Trovatore* is striking, since Verdi has written far better operas. Great poverty, nay barrenness of invention indeed is its chief want. Those moments which impress the ear agreeably, contain only happy reminiscences, and more than palpable allusions to the works of his predecessors. But in our present poverty in melody, one is so comforted and grateful, if a pleasing cantilena of the singer interrupts for once the orchestral *spectacle*, that such melodic passages always kindle up enthusiasm. Sharply pointed rhythms, often worse than grotesque, syncopations, *slaccati*, and retarded passages, must give a new aspect to the old measure:—add a mysterious instrumental accompaniment, a gigantic cadence, and the effect is certain. Effect, and only effect, is the spur to all the deeds of Verdi, and you may trust him that he will reach it for the most part in a very cheap way. He expended the greatest labor upon a refined, and to the Italians almost entirely new treatment of the orchestra; sought to make the rhythmical part as piquant as possible; no matter what the subject of an aria, introduced sharply accented triplet passages into the voice part; set, in place of the cadenzas formerly sung upon one vowel, declamatory passages with words on every note; wove in many, in some respects original, but to our ear extremely comical choruses, and, to strengthen the effect of the cantilena, accompanied almost all the melodies with the necessary brass. And to what good account did he not turn his Parisian experience with regard to the choice of libretti! The *Dame aux Camelias*, of Dumas, and similar moral stories, afforded him the most appropriate stuff for his musical dramas; besides which he also cultivated classic ground, translating into music Schiller's "Robbers," "Maid of Orleans" and "Cabal and Love," as well as Shakespeare's "Macbeth," "Lear," &c. A wilder, more repulsive subject than the *Trovatore* probably was never treated in an opera. Poison, daggers, curses, madness are the elements that lie at the foundation and find their expression frequently in long chains of trills.

A word about the execution. All Italian song requires a peculiar sort of rendering and interpretation, in which our German singers are not at all well versed. Much is altogether lost with us, and so this opera must necessarily express less than it otherwise would, since it, more than those of other Italians, is built upon such presumptions on the part of the performers. Herr KRAUSE could not succeed in giving his voice the sombre and mysterious tone which his part requires. Herr FORMES, with his powerful voice, had most effect in the more energetic passages; but the Verdi accents would be far more effective if the voice would not persist always in the same degree of force, but would employ frequently and rapidly the *sforzando*. Moreover his vocal method is not free from un-noble elements, which ill beseeem a Troubadour, and the faulty roll of the *r* is very annoying. Fräulein WAGNER played admirably, but has to sing too much in those deep tones, that have grown intolerable to our ear, to leave an agreeable impression. Mme. KÖSTER distinguished herself in the more grateful but exacting part of Leonora; she played and sung alike admirably, and came nearest to the Italian manner of delivery. Herr FRICKE's voice sounded often finely, but is not yet quite sure and free in the attacks. The *unison* choruses, so uninspiringly comical to our German ears, and which but rarely make way for singing in two or three parts, were well executed. The opera was quite well received by the very numerous public, and the individual artists were richly applauded and call-

ed out for their severely taxing efforts.—So much for the last three months of Opera in Berlin. Next week we will review the concerts. *Jf.*

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, MAY 9, 1857.

### CONCERTS.

THE CATHOLIC CHOIRS.—Mozart's *Requiem*, besides other Catholic music, was performed on Sunday evening in the Music Hall by the Choir of the Cathedral in Franklin Street, assisted by members of the Choirs of SS. Peter and Paul, South Boston, St. Patrick's, Northampton Street, and of the Holy Trinity, Suffolk Street, together with full orchestra and organ, all under the direction of Mr. A. WERNER, musical conductor at the Cathedral. The united choir was small, numbering about sixty voices all told, so that the great choruses of the *Requiem* could not be expected to roll forth with the majestic volume that they did from the two or three hundred voices of the Handel and Haydn Society. Yet the effect was far greater than we could have anticipated; indeed at times the sublimity of the music was fully realized and felt. And this was owing partly to the earnestness and heartiness with which the choral duty was discharged by those believers in such music as a part of their religion; partly to the thorough manner in which their conductor had drilled them, considering the short period, to sing in a strange place; and partly, we are inclined to think, very largely, to the novel and improved arrangement of the forces, which was neither more nor less than that suggested by our correspondent in these columns a few weeks since, and based on the hints of Berlioz. The instruments were placed behind the choir; it would have been better had not this also placed them *above* the choir; but this was partly remedied by bringing the singers compactly together upon a raised platform in the middle of the stage, (the Beethoven statue meanwhile had been moved back to the organ); the tenors and basses stood behind the sopranos and contraltos, who in most of the choruses remained seated. The effect fully justified the change, and to most listeners was surprising.

The concert opened with a Fugue in G minor, for four hands, very clearly and satisfactorily played upon the organ by two young lads, Masters HENRY and HODGES, pupils of Mr. Werner. It was lost, however, upon the great mass of the audience, who would not listen, nor allow those who would to hear much. An unwanted crowd that, for the Music Hall! composed of course very largely of the Irish Catholic population, who listened to not a little with reverence and wonder, but who had a singularly naive and frank way of showing when they were interested and when they were weary. The concert, to be sure, was too long, and one could not wonder that so many seats were vacated before the end. Then came the *Requiem*. The choruses, as we have said, were most of them sung quite effectively, and admirably helped out by the orchestra. The best parts were the solemn opening: *Requiem aeternam*, with its fugue *Kyrie*, and the finale: *Lux aeterna*, to the same notes; the tremendous *Dies iræ*, and *Rex tremendæ*, the beautiful *Lacrymosa*, (sung

here, as it should be, as chorus and not quartet,) the *Sanctus*, and the *Agnus Dei*. The *Confutatis* was not badly done, but needs especially broader masses of voices to give the full contrast between the dark and stormy opening and the heavenly sunshine of soprani in the last line: *Voca me cum benedictis*. The movements of the *Offertorium* are too difficult and too trying to the strength and the endurance of any ordinary choir.

The quartet of soli fared not so well. The voices were not at home in the hall, perhaps over-exerted themselves in their imagination of its difficulties, and not trained to concert singing, and the consequence was that some of the concerted pieces were badly out of tune and others ineffective, especially the *Recordare*, which is very difficult as well as very beautiful. We must make an exception, however, in favor of the soprano, Mrs. WERNER, who began feebly on the first bit of solo: *Te decet hymnus*, &c., but the beauty of whose voice, and the sincere and hearty style of whose singing grew upon us steadily from that moment. The others too succeeded well in parts. It would be unfair to criticize. Criticism was disarmed by the beautiful spirit in which all entered into the common work. There was but one object, in which each coöperated as he best could, and that was to bring out Mozart's *Requiem*. The individual forgot herself or himself in the work. It was truly refreshing, and in contrast with most concerts, (sacred oratorios included), to see the production of a great work not made wholly dependent upon and subordinate to the chances of individual display in solo singers. Here each solo was taken as a duty, as a sacrifice if you please, by the person who could do it best, even if there was no glory to be gained by it; and in that spirit would we see all noble music brought before the public. We are sure we speak the general feeling of the audience when we say, that whatever was wanting in the solo-singing was more than made up by the unction thus lent to the whole. They did their best, heartily and humbly, and thereby did themselves much credit.

The second part of the concert commenced with a very long, elaborate, and splendid *Gloria*, from Hummel's Mass, No. 2, in E flat. A portion of this was confused and discordant, but for the most part it was effectively sung. A duet for tenor and soprano, *Panem de Cælo*, by Terziani, a piece of smooth, flowing, rather operatic melody, was very sweetly sung. The *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*, from Haydn's Imperial Mass, (No. 3, if we remember rightly), sounded truly imposing. The soprano solo in the *Benedictus* has a strong family likeness with something in the "Creation." A very quaint and singular piece of harmony is the: *Adjutor et susceptor meus*, by Cherubini; a piece which, like everything by that great master, we would gladly hear more than once. Mrs. Werner sang with much expression, and great flexibility and florid execution, a very operatic solo by Lambillote: *Quam dilecta tabernacula tua*. The *Credo*, from the first of Beethoven's two masses, the one in C, is a magnificent composition, in all points a most eloquent setting of the text, and worthy to close a concert commencing with the *Requiem*. How gloriously buoyant the expression of the orchestral figure which accompanies the first sentence! how startling the announcement: *Deum de Deo; Lumen de Lumine*, &c. What profound pathos and

solemnity in the *Crucifixus*; and what inspiring life in *Et resurrexit*! It was finely rendered, even to the elaborate and very jubilant concluding fugue: *Et vitam venturi*, &c. Yet the impression was weakened by its coming so late in the evening, and by the noise of satiated people going out.

The concert as a whole must be regarded as a success, and we would gladly hail it as an earnest of many more of the same kind. Our opportunities of hearing the noble compositions in the Mass form are entirely too few.

**BOSTON CHORISTERS' SCHOOL.**—We were surprised on entering the Tremont Temple Wednesday evening, to see so small an audience at the repetition of Mr. CUTLER's concert of English Cathedral and Oratorio Music. The rare pleasure experienced at the first by everybody present, seemed a sure guaranty of a hall quite full the second time. It was an audience, however, whose approbation was well worth having, and the performances gave a satisfaction quite as general and more lively than before. Mr. A. W. THAYER repeated his historical and explanatory remarks, with variations and additions, most acceptably to all. There was a partial change of programme.

The first piece was an ancient Choral, or plain-song, believed to have been composed by Gregory the Great, about the year 600. It was of course sung in unison, by men's voices only. The effect was strange and solemn; in spite of its quaint and shapeless form, with nothing that seemed like a final cadence to set the mind at rest, the effect was edifying. Next was sung by boys and men, still in unison, Luther's well known Choral: *Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott*, which has rhythmical form and balance, and with the figural organ accompaniment filling the pauses between the lines, played in true German style by Mr. CUTLER, it sounded nobly. It would have been instructive to the audience to have heard it repeated also in harmony, by Bach, or some good master. The *Deus misereatur*, upon the third Gregorian tone, illustrated the rhythmical modification of the old plain-song by the English church.

The great Elizabethan period of English church composers, the age of Tallis, Tye, Morley, Farrant, &c., was exemplified by a single specimen, the Anthem: "Lord for thy tender mercies' sake," by Farrant. This was finely sung, with perfect truth and balance of parts, by boys and men, without organ. It is a clear, round, solid, English sounding composition, full of robust health and free from affectation. The anthem of a later period, by the older Webbe, seemed a more elaborate development of the same style, and was highly applauded. This was followed by an account of the suppression of the church music by the Puritans, with a touching picture of the manner in which it was here and there cherished in secret, apropos of which the 74th Psalm, to a wild minor Anglican chant was sung, antiphonally, with a saddening effect, although, like most chanting, it was a perpetual repetition of one short harmonic phrase and cadence.

By way of variety before proceeding to the music of the second English school, after the Restoration, the Trio from "Elijah": *Lift thine eyes*, was again sung by three boys, without accompaniment. The effect was indescribably beautiful; their voices were singularly pure and fresh and innocent, well contrasted and well blended, and the silvery clearness and sweetness of the first soprano sounded almost angelic. We never heard the Trio sung so perfectly; it received an unanimous encore. How fine would be the effect of this Trio so sung when "Elijah" is performed at the forth-coming Festival!

Of the second English school were sung the Nicene Creed from a service by Dr. Benjamin Rog-

ers, which interested us by a certain peculiar depth and strangeness of harmonic coloring, and a something dramatic in its startling responses; an Anthem by Dr. Boyce: *For the Lord shall comfort Zion*, and his *Te Deum* in A, which was sung before. These are highly elaborate, fugued compositions, exceedingly impressive, and were admirably sung.

The oratorio selections were four from Handel, English by adoption, and whom the lecturer's remarks made to be equally a debtor and a benefactor to the English music. We must think about that.

The simple, innocent and child-like aspiration of the air: "Brighter scenes I seek above," from "Jephtha," was beautifully sung by Master FRED. WHITE, the silvery soprano of that angelic Trio, and had to be repeated. A very noble chorus from "Judas Maccabæus": *We worship God and God alone*, in which this steadfast simplicity of faith is constantly kept up through the freer soarings of the fugue by a pervading choral, impressed us deeply. Mr. C. R. ADAMS sang the recitative and air: *Total Eclipse, no sun! no moon!* &c., from "Samson," with rare and touching beauty. His tenor grows continually in power and sweetness; and in this most affecting song, he showed that he is acquiring a mastery of the fine shades of expression. It is really the most encouraging tenor that has sprung up among us. In this, and in all the Handelian selections, the organ accompaniment was beautifully played by Mr. CUTLER. The chorus from "Samson": *Then round about the stony throne*, fitly closed the concert. It was delightful to observe with what ease and certainty the boy's voices thrived the tangled maze of fugue.

We trust that by these concerts a beginning has been made which shall lead to oft renewed and complete public expositions of the merits of this English school of music.

## Musical Intelligence.

London.

**ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.**—The eleventh season was inaugurated at the Lyceum on the 14th, with Bellini's *Puritani*: Grisi as Elvira, Sig. Gardoni as Arthur, Graziani as Ricardo, and the other parts by Mme. Borgaro, Signors Tagliafico, Soldi and Polonini. Costa, as conductor, was loudly welcomed. The *Times* says:

It is not possible to witness Grisi's Elvira, even at the present time, without a certain emotion. For example, the mezza voce, (of which Grisi was always an accomplished mistress), in the theme of the polacca, ("Son vergin"), which more than compensated for a certain timidity accompanying the execution of the florid variation of the coda; the sotto voce with which the opening of the mad scene, ("Qui la voce") was delivered; the dramatic ebullition of passion that gave life and reality to Elvira's appeal to Giorgio:

"O toglietemi la vita,  
O rendetemi il mio amor!"

the genuine feeling and rich quality of the middle tones of the voice in the well known "Vien, diletto"—these and other excellencies deserve to be chronicled as proofs that if Grisi is not the Elvira so many of us can remember, she is still, viewing the part historically and vocally as a whole, without a competent successor. The audience received their old favorite last night with their accustomed warmth; she was twice recalled, and continually applauded, just as if she had never taken leave of the public in 1854.

As Signor Gardoni and Signo Graziani were both afflicted, more or less, with hoarseness, we need not criticize their performances. In the case of the latter this contretemps necessitated the omission of the obstreperous duet, "Suoni la tromba," between Giorgio (Signor Tagliafico) and Ricardo, of which Rossini, when writing to a friend at Bologna an account of the production of *I Puritani* in Paris, said: "The duet for the basses I need not describe—you must have heard it." On the whole, however, in spite of many drawbacks, the opera, as we have hinted, was well performed.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE was opened the same night. We copy from the *Times* again:

The aspect the house last night presented, when the doors were opened for the season of 1857, gave evidence of continued prosperity.

Respecting the new tenor, Signor Giuglini, who made his first appearance last night in *La Favorita*, the greatest curiosity prevailed. The very first aria



convinced his auditors that he was not one of those vocalists who look so large in the columns of an Italian or Spanish newspaper and sound so small when they reach a London or Parisian stage. The compass of the voice was evidently extensive, and, moreover, even throughout, without any breaks in the high or low places; the notes all came from the chest, the intonation was faultless, and the tender emotions of earlier scenes were expressed with genuine feeling. But when, discovering that his King has fobbed him off with an unworthy marriage, the newly made noble dashes his order upon the ground and breaks his sword across his knee, there was a spirit in Signor Giuglini's action and a force in his voice from which it was easy to be seen that the gentle lover of the first act had given slight hints rather than full demonstrations of his strength.

The beautiful aria, "Spirito Gentil," in which the solitary Fernando abstracts himself from the vices of his lost bride and indulges in mystical contemplation of her beauty, is revealed to his mind's eye, was given with the most exquisite feeling imaginable, the voice being thoroughly subdued down to all the humility of hopeless misery, but fully sonorous and distinct throughout. It was a lyrical wail, kept within the bounds of the best taste, and the falsetto notes—which the vocalist now introduced for the first time—seemed wondrously accordant with the anguish assumed. A unanimous demand for an *encore* immediately followed the conclusion of the aria, and consideration for the singer alone prevented the honor from being repeated. There is nothing very extraordinary in applause at the song, but the entranced manner in which the audience hung upon the notes of this aria, as they were so softly and smoothly poured forth by Signor Giuglini, and the sudden change from rapt attention into noisy enthusiasm made up a compound effect that is only witnessed on the occasion of genuine triumphs. From this moment the vocalist seemed inspired, and when the lady of his thoughts seemed bodily present, and he reproached her with the incorrectness of her position at Court, he reached the perfection of musical declamation. The voice, in which power had hitherto seemed the least remarkable quality, now reverberated through the house, gaining volume from the assumed rage of the singer. When the curtain fell three enthusiastic calls brought Signor Giuglini and Mademoiselle Spezia as many times to the lamps, and then the *habitués*, having first summoned Mr. Lunley into their presence and honored him with a thunder of congratulations, retired into the lobby to discuss the events of the evening. The success of the new tenor was on every tongue, and the only question was, how far we must look back to find a like triumphant *debut* of the same class of voice.

Mademoiselle Spezia, who played the frail but lovely Leonora, is an actress of great energy, and made a considerable sensation by the details of the dying scene in the last act. Her voice, most extensive in its register, is not remarkable for flexibility, and her attention has probably been directed more to dramatic expression than to the mere effects of vocalization. The spirit with which she interpreted the character completely gained for her the sympathies of the audience, and, though Signor Giuglini was the "lion" of the evening, she had every reason to be satisfied with her reception. The important character of Baldassare was played by a third *débutant*, Signor Vialletti, a *basso profundo*, endowed with extraordinary power in the lower region of his voice. Signor Benvenuto, the *père noble* of last year, was an august Alfonso XI.

**THE HANDEL FESTIVAL.**—Preparations, (says the *Advertiser*), are already making at the Crystal Palace in England, for the celebration of the centenary anniversary of Handel's death in 1759. In aid of these preparations a preliminary essay was gotten up for the celebration of the ninety-eighth anniversary, (on the 15th, 17th and 19th of this coming June.) In the London *Times* of the 13th, we have an account of two rehearsals which had already been had, viz.: of "Israel in Egypt" and the "Messiah." "Judas Maccabæus" was to follow on the 15th. Several weeks had been occupied by "the Metropolitan division of the chorus," aided by competent professional advisers, in making a selection of 1100 "picked voices." They were selected individually, upon a trial of each at the piano-forte, practising the compass and quality of voice, proficiency at sight reading, and other essential gifts, all of which were registered so as to guarantee the ultimate choice of the most efficient. The effect at the two recitations above mentioned, was pronounced "more than satisfactory." Of the arrangements for that of Wednesday, the 15th, we have the following account. They are on a scale nearly equal to that of fitting out a first class ship of war:

The provincial branches of the chorus are forming in the principal cities and towns of Great Britain under the guidance of professors and amateurs of acknowledged ability.

The numbers and distribution of the orchestra are already determined on. There will be 76 first violins, 74 second violins, 50 violas, 50 violoncellos, and 50 double-basses, (in all 300 stringed instruments); 9 flutes, 9 oboes, 9 clarionets, 9 bassoons, 12 horns, 12 trumpets and cornets, 9 trombones, 3 ophicleides, 9 serpents and bass-horns, 3 drums, and 6 side-drums, (90 wind instruments)—a force hitherto unprecedented.

The organ, constructed expressly for the occasion by Messrs. Gray and Davison, will be one of great power and on an appropriately gigantic scale. The instrument being nearly in a state of completion, the swell and great organs were recently tried in the manufactory; but, as there was not space enough even in the very extensive premises of the makers to put up the pedal organ, it could not be heard on that occasion. What was tested, however, was unanimously approved by the connoisseurs present. The organ will occupy a platform in the Crystal Palace of 40 feet wide by 24 deep. \* \* The weight of the new instrument will be somewhere about twenty tons, which, as it is to remain a fixture, will demand a platform of the most solid and durable nature. The orchestra, already completed, occupies a space of 168 feet in width, (just 38 feet wider than Exeter Hall), and 90 feet in depth. The seats for the performers are gradually raised, one above another, so that every instrumentalist and vocalist can have a full view of their conductor. The band will be in front, the chorus at the back. The aspect presented by this gigantic superstructure, when crowded from roof to base with singers and players, can hardly fail to be one of the most imposing description. The whole is contrived on the most approved principles for the insuring strength and resistance. The beams of timber, screwed and bolted together, (there are no nails), with their stage and struts and bearings, present the appearance of a complete forest of wood-work. The two upper rows, allotted to the instrumental department of the orchestra, will be consigned to the double-basses, &c. Between these and the seats intended for the chorus there is a broad avenue for passage to and fro. In short, the accommodation is so judiciously arranged that every singer and player will be thoroughly at ease, and thus better able to give to the ensemble the benefit of his talents.

### Musical Chat-Chat.

The preparations for the Festival go on bravely—three rehearsals weekly. The time grows short, hardly a fortnight, yet we hear of no rehearsal of the "Choral" Symphony. To let that fall through again, would be worse failure than all the other promised glories could offset. Shall so great a work go without a hearing merely for want of some self-sacrificing solo tenor or soprano! Is the great end of the Festival to show forth this, that and the other solo singer in the most flattering light! Pray let us have the Symphony, if the solos can be done but passably. May our good stars yet send us LAGRANGE, and all will be right. Speaking of the Festival, we are reminded of a suggestion, urged in the *Traveller* and the *Courier*, that the miscellaneous concerts should be used to some extent for the production of new works by American composers. We would we had room to copy the *Traveller's* article; as it is, we can only add our hearty commendation of the plan. There should be room, in those three days, without much sacrifice of classic works, for introducing at least one native work per day.

OLE BULL draws his magic bow again to-night before a Boston audience, and will no doubt be warmly welcomed. His programme is altogether popular. He will play a fantasia on Bellini's *Romeo*, another on American airs, his well known "Mother's Prayer," and "Carnival of Venice." The singing will be wholly English: Mr. HARRISON will do the serious (ballad), and Mr. Hornecastle the comic extravaganza part. . . . Sig. BENDELARI, the accomplished maestro of singing, gave a brilliant soirée at Chickering's on Thursday evening, with his pupils and classes, to the number of some sixty ladies and twenty gentlemen. About twenty of the best Italian airs, cavatinas, duets, quartets and choruses were sung, the maestro himself playing all the piano accompaniments with great taste and skill. We have only room now to say that there was some of the finest chorus-singing, by the whole eighty voices, that we ever listened to, and that the beauty and culture

of voice, style and execution of difficult airs and cavatinas, displayed by quite a number of young ladies, was truly remarkable. . . . We were sorry to be out of town on the evening of Miss TWICHELL's concert. The *Traveller* says: "It is very seldom that a concert is given in which the critic finds so much to commend," and this seems to be the general impression.

Read our Berlin letter, lovers of opera. Think of such a bill of fare for three months, embracing every style and school of opera: Gluck, Mozart, Cherubini, Weber, Donizetti, Verdi, Wagner—not one of these varieties, but *all* in a single season. Were our opportunities as various, our tastes would be more cosmopolitan and just; there would be less quarrelling about German and Italian, and each kind would take its place and pass for what it is worth.

The exhibition of Sculpture and Paintings at the Athenæum Gallery this season is one of unusual interest. Never before have we had so rich and choice a collection of paintings, or one (thanks to the zeal and taste of the Boston Art Club) so well arranged. The ALLSTON works alone, especially his "Beatrice" and those wonderful Italian landscapes, which have not been seen in public since the Allston exhibition twenty years ago, are worth a long journey to behold. Then there is the DOWSE collection of Water Colors, the finest in the country, some of the best works of PAGE, capital specimens of the last efforts of our young Boston artists, such as HUNT, AMES, CHAMPEY, GAY, WIGHT, WILDE, GERRY, Miss CLARKE, &c. &c. and all those venerable old inhabitants of the Athenæum, some of the largest of which are happily made to line the walls as you ascend the staircase.

### Advertisements.

#### OLE BULL'S GRAND FAREWELL CONCERTS.

##### Notice to the Public.

The Manager of these Concerts takes great pleasure in announcing to the citizens of Boston and the public generally, that (in consequence of OLE BULL having decided upon returning to Norway the ensuing summer for the benefit of his health,) he has been induced to fix the price of admission to these (his last) Concerts at 50 cents, which will give an opportunity for every person to hear the greatest Violinist living before his final departure from this country.

OLE BULL respectfully announces that he will give  
**ONE GRAND CONCERT**  
**AT TREMONT TEMPLE,**  
**On Saturday Evening, May 9th, 1857,**  
Assisted by the following eminent talent:

**Mr. George Harrison,**  
The celebrated English Ballad Singer,  
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(Of the Pyne and Harrison Opera troupe) and  
**Mr. William Dressler,**  
The talented Pianist and Composer.

For full particulars, see programmes.  
Tickets, 50 cents, may be had at Russell & Richardson's, where seats may be secured without extra charge. Office open for the sale of seats on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, between 9 and 4 o'clock.  
Doors open at 7—Concert to commence at 8 o'clock.

#### GREAT MUSICAL FESTIVAL IN BOSTON!

**THE HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY**  
WILL HOLD A  
**Grand Musical Festival,**  
**AT THE MUSIO HALL IN BOSTON,**  
**IN THE MONTH OF MAY,**  
On a plan similar to those held in Birmingham, Berlin, and other European Cities.

The arrangements for this Festival have been made on the most liberal scale. The Choir having been augmented, by invitations, will number some SIX HUNDRED, and the Orchestra SEVENTY-FIVE.  
The Artists engaged are of the best available talent in the country, and no labor or expense will be spared to make this  
**The Great Musical Feature of the Season.**  
The Festival will continue for three consecutive days, commencing on the morning of the 21st, with an Opening Address by Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, as an Inaugural to the Festivities.

The following Oratorios will be performed:  
**HAYDN'S "CREATION,"**  
**MENDELSSOHN'S "ELIJAH,"** and  
**HANDEL'S "MESSIAH."**

Together with Miscellaneous and Orchestral Concerts on the afternoons of each day. The entertainments to be in the day time, with the exception of the "Messiah," with which the Festival will close on the evening of Saturday.  
Further particulars will be given in future advertisements.  
L. B. BARNES, Sec'y.

**ATHENÆUM EXHIBITION.**

A JOINT EXHIBITION of Paintings and Statuary by the BOSTON ATHENÆUM and the BOSTON ART CLUB, is now open at the Athenæum, in Beacon Street. Among many other valuable Paintings are a large number of WASHINGTON ALLSTON'S best Works, and the Dowse Collection of Water Colors.

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